

## THIRTY-TWO PATHS OF WISDOM

### Lesson Fourteen

The twenty-fifth path of wisdom descends from Tiphareth to Yesod. It is the link between the Sphere of the Sun and the Sphere of the Moon; between the EGO and the automatic consciousness; and between the Egoic Body and the Vital Soul and its Astral Body.

The name of the twenty-fifth path is the Intelligence of Probation, שְׁבֵל נִסְיָוָנִי, saykel nisawyuni. The adjective is derived from נִסְיָה, nisawyun, meaning "trial, temptation, test, experiment, experience."

The work of this path is described as being the "first test whereby the Creator tries the compassionate." They to whom this test is applied are the Chasidim, in whom is active the spirit of mercy derived from the fourth Sephirah.

Now, in Qabalistic psychology, the fourth Sephirah is energized by a current from Chaiyah, the life-force in Chokmah, passing through the path of the letter Vav. The Chasidim are they who devote themselves wholly to becoming receptive to the instruction of the ONE SELF, pictured in Key 5 as the Hierophant. They are persons who turn their mental gaze inward, away from the distractions and illusions of outward appearance in the world of name and form. They seek to cultivate their desires and improve their knowledge by continual communication with the ONE SELF. Their purpose in this is to fit themselves to minister to the welfare of humanity. Theirs is no selfish quest. They seek to be servants of the Most High. In them is active the basic psychological quality of the fourth path of wisdom, namely memory. The Chasidim are men and women who never forget their dependence on the Cosmic Life.

In the Grades of the Rosicrucian Order they are called Exempt Adepts. They are free from all thought of being heavy-laden, free from all thought that they must be burdened by past Karma, or weighted down with responsibilities. Free, also, from the feeling that anything they do is hard labor. For they live in continual realization of the promise: "Cast your burden on the Lord, and he will sustain you." (Psalm 55:22)

The Hebrew of this promise is in six words, and the sum of their values is 666. We think of this number usually as being that of the mysterious Beast mentioned in Revelation. It is actually a solar number, and in the Apocalypse its special meaning is a cryptic reference to the Roman Empire, and to one particular Caesar, Nero. For the symbol of the Caesars was a solar disk, and the essential spirit of Roman imperialism was a crass, materialistic exaltation of physical force.

Nevertheless, 666 is by no means always an evil number. It is the value for the Hebrew אֱלֹהִים, Elohim, "Your God," reckoning the final Mem as 600. It is the value of the "secret place" of God, mentioned in Psalm 18:11, where "his secret place" is סִתְרָן, 666. It is the number of סֻוֶּת, Sorath, the Spirit of the Sun, and of שְׁמֵשׁ-יְהוָה, Shemesh-Jehovah, which is connected with Tiphareth, and means "Sun of Jehovah." Finally, it is the value of the Qabalistic spelling of The Name Jesus, שֵׁם יְהוָה, Shem Yehoshuah, which signifies "The idea (name or word) that the nature of Reality is to liberate."

The Chasidim do nothing of themselves. The truth, pictured in Key 14 as Michael, the Angel of Jehovah, is the real Actor in all personal thinking, speaking or doing. With them this is an ever-present recollection. They are possessors of that "truth" which the New Testament calls alethia, literally, "not-forgetfulness." Thus, when Jesus said, "I am the truth," the inner significance of his statement was, "I am the continual recollection (not-forgetfulness)." This state of mind is established in one who has gained the Grade of Exempt Adept by practice, and the practice is what we see in Key 5 which symbolizes even by its number the essential meaning of Key 14.

The difference between the two Keys and the paths corresponding to them is that Key 5 has to do with receiving instruction, while Key 14 has to do with testing the instruction in the fires of actual experience. The Chasidim are adepts, remember. They are thaumaturgists, and even at this present time we hear marvels concerning the mighty works of members of the Jewish sect to whom this particular name is applied. To be sure, not every member of this sect is a wonder-worker, nor is it true that one must be a pious Jew to be a "Chassid." Yet there is abundant evidence that some of these Jewish Chasidim do exercise the command over natural forces pictured in Tarot by Key 8.

When we study the lives and works of Masters of Compassion outside the ranks of Israel, we find them using the same practices and teaching the same doctrines. Buddha, for example, emphasized right recollectiveness. Of this, Allan Bennett, an Elder of the Buddhist Order, who was proficient also in Qabalah and Tarot, writes:

"The object of this practice, then, is not to put an end to this condition of flux of the mental stream, which would be impossible; but to direct that stream always in the sense in which we desire that it should progress. And the method advocated is not only a very peculiar one, but one that is most difficult to pursue. It consists, as it were, in constantly observing, in standing apart and watching and noting accurately just what we are doing all through our daily life; combined, on the one hand, with a constant effort to cast out the Self-concept from our consciousnesses as they arise; and, on the other hand, with keeping before us all the time the recollection of our high aim;--that we are doing all this to reduce the suffering of life."

Not our personal suffering, but the sum-total of the world's suffering. The motive, you see, is that of compassion; and the theory is that one who practices right recollection is able by his own illumination to shed light into the darkened minds of his contemporaries. Not only light, but healing also. The same writer continues:

"And so with whatsoever you may be engaged on, you sit apart, as it were, and intently watch, down to the minutest detail, what you are doing; you suppress as far as possible all idea that it is you that do these things."

This practice is not so difficult as Allan Bennet would have us believe. To him, and to others who accept exoteric explanations of Buddha's apparent denial of the reality of the EGO, the work is made difficult by their supposition that one must not only watch impressions, but must also suppress the idea that an EGO is active.

What Buddha really taught was the falsity of the conception that there is a separate ego incarnate in every human being. What he built up in those disciples who really understood the practice of right recollection was knowledge that every human personal activity is a manifestation of power which flows into the field of personal awareness, and out of it again. This flow of power produces the feeling of "egoity." What we feel, moreover, is really present. The error of supposing each of us owns a "self" is what makes all the trouble. The truth is the reverse. Every single human personality is "owned" by the EGO in Tiphareth.

When we get this idea into clear focus, practice becomes easy because we understand that the work is not ours, but rather the business of what Key 14 pictures as an angel. The guidance of the Holy Guardian Angel is with us always. When its work on a given personality reaches a certain stage, that person seems to himself to desire liberation. He feels determined to travel the Way of Return.

Truly he is determined, but the Determiner is the EGO in Tiphareth. The person feels that he must practice. If he complicates the work by vain attempts to try to convince himself that there is nothing real behind his feeling of "egoity," his practice takes on an aspect of almost insuperable difficulty.

The simple terms of the Rosicrucian vow to look upon every circumstance as a particular dealing of God with one's soul provide a clear pattern for right recollection. Sooner or later it will dawn upon us that even our decision so to regard every event, and our mental effort to keep the vow, are just as much part of God's particular dealings as anything else. Then the difficulties vanish, and we find that the "royal yoga" is veritably the "easy yoke."

The law of suggestion comes into play here. If we believe ourselves to be autonomous beings, acting by our own powers, many tasks will seem difficult. Before we begin them we stand aghast at their seeming magnitude. Thus many of our aspirations are doomed because subconsciously we think, "I never can do it."

The remedy for this disease is in the disease itself. We never can do anything of ourselves, and so long as we misuse the pronoun "I" to designate a non-existent, separate "self," our doubts of our ability are more than justified. When we take the cure, which is to deny that there is any separate "self," and fix our gaze, like the Fool, on the only Source of power, then we begin to see that what is at work in our occult practices is the very same power that creates and sustains the universe. Thus we begin to realize that the power which is making "new creatures" of us is more than able to accomplish the undertaking. What can make a solar system and keep it in order is surely able to regulate the personality of a single human being!

Don't think we are over-simplifying this, just to encourage you. It is the exact truth. Begin by becoming alert and watchful like the Magician. This is the precept of Jesus: "What I am telling you I mean for all--Be on the watch!" The original Greek verb means "keep awake, be attentive." Dull lack of attention is what makes possible our bondage to so much nonsense. In one day, if we watch, we can see enough to wake

us forever from the delusion of separateness. Then the rest is simply keeping at it, and even this becomes easy when we grasp the truth that what we have to watch is really the Sun-Self in us shining daily and hourly to illuminate the Way of Return.

Jupiter rules Sagittarius, and in Tarot Jupiter is the Wheel of Fortune. Thus the work of the twenty-fifth path is concerned with our daily testing by Spirit, to see whether or not we interpret our experiences correctly as being cosmic events, just as truly as they are personal activities. Notice that we do not have to deny that they are personal activities which really occur. What we get from our steady watchfulness is the comprehension that what we call a "personal activity" is that plus something more, and the something more is its being a special manifestation, in our personal field of time and space, of forces and laws which flow into that field and out of it, but never originate in it.

The twenty-sixth path of wisdom carries the power of Ruach in Tiphareth down to Hod. It is the link between the Sphere of the Sun and the Sphere of Mercury, between imagination and intellect, and between the Egoic Body and the Mental Body.

The profound symbolism of this path is directly connected with the sign Capricorn, the sign in which the World-Savior is born. Note that the Christian Christmas feast cannot possibly be a celebration of the actual date of the birth of Jesus. Careful study of the Gospel accounts makes it clear that Jesus must have been born early in October, from three to eight years before the traditional beginning of the Christian Era. We commemorate the birth of the World-Savior in December because the origin of that feast goes back to early forms of wisdom-teaching.

In India the name for the sign Capricorn is Makara, loosely translated "crocodile," but really meaning "dragon" or "sea-monster." It is closely related to the Leviathan mentioned in the Old Testament. In Sanskrit, the literal meaning of Makara is "five-handed" or "five-sided." Thus this esoteric name of the tenth sign of the zodiac is related to the pentagram, which is part of the symbolism of Key 15. Observe that the pentagram is one of the symbols for Mars, the planet exalted in Capricorn.

Again the number of Key 15 is the extension of 5, the number of the Hierophant. Hence the composition of Key 15 includes certain resemblances to that of Key 5, together with equally emphatic differences.

The Devil, nevertheless, is the angel of Key 14, misunderstood by the ignorance of the unenlightened. He represents the way the Holy Angel and its work, in developing human personality before one awakens from the nightmare of delusion, are interpreted by a person who is the subject of the operation. While yet we suffer from the delusion, our Guide seems to be our Adversary. Here is the inner meaning of the Qabalistic numeral identity between נַחַשׁ, Nachash, the Tempter, and מְשִׁיחָה, Messiah, the Deliverer. The Adversary is the Master of the Game, and as we play with him he develops our intellectual skill, our ability to plan, our foresight and judgment. Thus the twenty-sixth path ends in the Sphere of Mercury, where Qabalists place the personal mental Body and the intellectual powers.

In confirmation of this Qabalistic correspondence, note that the adjective מְחֻדָשׁ, makhodash, Renewing or Renovating, has also the numeral value 358, the same as the numeration of Nachash and of Messiah already noted. The Hebrew root of this adjective is akin to the verb in Psalm 51:10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." The same verb appears in Psalm 104:30: "Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth." Of similar import is the passage in Revelation 21:5: "Behold, I make all things new."

The Life-power is not only the Creator and the Preserver, but also the great Re-newer. In the process of renovation, old things pass away, and the unenlightened, clinging to familiar forms, distrust and fear these changes. This is why ignorant mis-understanding hates innovations, and looks upon the leaders of new movements as being inspired by the devil.

As you may see on the diagram of the Tree of Life, the twenty-sixth path is the continuation of the path of Yod and the Hermit, just as the twenty-fourth path is the continuation of the path of Lamed and Justice. Through the letter Ayin it is connected with mental and physical vision.

When we suppose our power of seeing and reasoning belong to us personally, we make for ourselves a private world in which the controlling power is irrational, blind necessity. We are "taken in" by superficial appearances. Our knowledge is half-knowledge, like that of so many modern scientists who, in superstitious reverence for what they are pleased to term "objective" reality, avoid and deny all inner experience because they are desperately afraid of anything "subjective."

If we fall into this error, our definitions are bound to be false. Yet, because all vision is creative, and our definitions of ourselves and of the nature of our environment are bound to take form in action, our experience seems to confirm our errors. In our dream of separation we are not less creative than when enlightenment releases us from bondage. We ourselves make our nightmare terrors, and the false, though seemingly plausible, logic of our dream makes everything in our experience appear to confirm our notions.

Thus no man is harder to convince than an unawakened materialist. The more intellectual he is, the more certain does it seem to him that what he calls "universal experience" is witness to the truth of his beliefs. Point out to him the fact that millions of persons on earth hold opinions exactly contrary to his, and he betrays his mental darkness, his immersion in the delusion of separateness, at once. If he dislikes you, he will berate you. If he values your good opinion, he will try to convince you that he is one of the few human beings who has a really superior mind.

Sooner or later such a person will have some devastating, eye-opening experience. Nor can we ever judge from a man's expressions of belief, nor from his present behavior, when that experience will come to him. Research into the varieties of spiritual experience brings to light some extraordinary instances of sudden "conversion."

Bear in mind that Saturn, whose symbol is displayed on the Devil's open right hand, is connected with the letter Tav, pictured in the Tarot series by Key 21. This principle of limitation is what we do not understand. Yet THE BOOK OF FORMATION tells us it is at the center of the Cube of Space, and calls that center the "holy habitation of the Lord," or the "Temple of Holiness in the midst, supporting all things." Thus Saturn's heraldic color, black, predominates in this picture of the Devil, and the darkness of the scene is like that of a cave, or subterranean crypt.

While we remain in bondage to ignorance, the Saturn principle which gives form to the world appears to be our adversary. "Things" appear to be against us. We see evil on every side. Our private world is full of conflicts and incongruities. Blind chance rules. We seldom permit ourselves to think about the future, and when we do so, we dread the prospect. We seem to be bound fast, and suspended over an abyss by the frail cord of temporal life, liable to be cut at any moment by the scythe of death.

All this is because we suppose ourselves to be separate, autonomous individuals. They who are so deluded usually persuade themselves that man is only a species of higher animal. One finds them taking a queer sort of satisfaction in their notion that they are "descended" from the beasts; and when this notion takes full possession of their minds they certainly fall into types of behavior which are worse than those of lions or tigers, snakes or scorpions. Such deluded persons create social systems devoted to wanton cruelties of every description. Of these, modern warfare is the most spectacular, but the cruelties of what passes for "peace" are not less horrible, nor have they been confined to "lesser breeds," or to those nations which are frankly committed to totalitarianism.

We who live in the United States, or in other nations belonging to the Democracies, have need of removing some beams from our own eyes before we try removing motes from the social and political outlook of other peoples. We have a pattern based on the vision of adepts in Ageless Wisdom. It is written in our Declaration of Independence. It is symbolized by our Great Seal. In some measure, though not perfectly, it is set forth in our Constitution. It is the pattern Walt Whitman had in mind when he celebrated "America" in his poems.

Behind this pattern is the idea that nothing is finer, nothing higher on earth, and nothing more potent than the essentially free Spirit of Man. That Spirit is the Deliverer, the Anointed, the Messiah, the Christos, the true EGO.

The seed-idea of true Americanism is the recognition of this EGO as being the Liberator of mankind. It is the recognition of the truth that this EGO is equally and impartially present in the temple of every human personality. It is the recognition of that EGO as being our point of contact with the still higher Reality, the triune Eternal Being represented on the Tree of Life by the upper triangle having its basal angles in Chokmah and Binah and its apex in Kether. This recognition is the only sound basis for the construction of the New Order of the Ages.

When made the conscious foundation for our social practice it will enable us to plan

a lasting and progressive peace for the world. For it implies that the equality of men mentioned in the Declaration of Independence is an inner equality at the level represented by Tiphareth. Below this level there are all sorts of differences in personal development. Yet, in our political institutions, imperfect as they may be in details, there is the kernel of a great truth. The EGO of all humanity influences human persons both consciously and, until they awaken, unconsciously. The minority who do awaken in any given generation then become conscious participants in the Great Work of the EGO.

This work is concerned with man's conscious, personal grasp of the meaning of his daily experience. The development of this conscious comprehension requires that persons be brought face to face with problems. For the ignorant, these problems are evils, caused by some principle of malice, working in external nature and in human nature, to bring about various natural disasters, and various types of human wickedness. Out of their own enlightenment the wise learn better. They come to recognize the EGO as being the only Actor. They know that their past "sins" are wholly forgiven being the inevitable imperfections of human thought and behavior expressed through the lives of unenlightened persons.

They look back over the panorama of their personal lives (for full enlightenment brings memory of other incarnations), and see that all their "personal" activities were part of what Qabalists call the Work of the Chariot. They find plenty of imperfections, but see how they were inevitable at the various stages of development. They find nothing to condemn.

Thus, out of their own experience, they are taught that there is nothing to condemn in the life of any human being. There are many imperfections, to be sure, but the person who sins and fails is simply a vehicle which the Life-power has not yet completed, and the Life-power does not condemn even the least of its unfinished instruments.

This does not open a door for sentimental condoning of ineffective, ill-judged, or false ideas or actions. Actions may be rightly judged (but only by those who are truly God-taught) as being "missings of the mark." Persons fall under no condemnation.

More than this, an enlightened man sees how the EGO works through the total expression of humanity to achieve its end, and that end is the liberation of all. Thus the wise believe in democracy, believe in the good results of abiding, in political affairs, by the expressed will of the majority. For they have first-hand experience to teach them that no matter how blind and ignorant persons may be, there is truly "a Destiny which shapes our ends, rough-hew them how we will."

That Destiny is the EGO, the Son in perfect union with the Father, the Anointed Liberator in Tiphareth. Angel of Death, to make the Great Work possible. Angel of Guidance, to set our feet upon the Way of Peace. Angel of Temptation, misunderstood by the ignorant as the Devil, when in truth he is the Eternal Renovator forever making all things new.

## THIRTY-TWO PATHS OF WISDOM

### Lesson Fifteen

The twenty-seventh path of wisdom is that of the letter Peh, symbolized in Tarot by Key 16. It is the third reciprocal path on the Tree of Life, joining Netzach to Hod, the Sphere of Venus to the Sphere of Mercury, the field of desire to that of intellect. In Hebrew, its name is שָׁכֶל מֹרַגֵּשׁ, saykel morawgash, Exciting or Active Intelligence. The adjective is from a verbal root meaning "to be noisy, to be tumultuous, to rage."

In an earlier lesson of this series we called attention to the fact that Netzach, the Sphere of Venus, receives from Tiphareth an influence essentially Martian in quality, that of the sign Scorpio, descending through the twenty-fourth path. This influence, moreover, is the continuation of that which descends to Tiphareth from Geburah, the Sphere of Mars.

Thus we may assume that the twenty-seventh path, assigned in THE BOOK OF FORMATION to Mars, may be considered to partake of the nature of Geburah. It is as if the current descending from Geburah through Tiphareth to Netzach were reflected back to Hod through this path.

In TAROT FUNDAMENTALS, Lesson 36, we mentioned two ancient titles for Key 16. One is "The House of God" and the other "The Fire of Heaven." Their Hebrew originals, when analyzed by Gematria, yield some interesting information concerning the sixteenth Key and the twenty-seventh path of wisdom.

In Hebrew the expression for "House of God" is בֵּית־הָאֱלֹהִים, Beth-ha-Elohim. Note that the first part of this phrase, Beth, is the name of the second Hebrew letter, corresponding to the twelfth path of wisdom descending from the first to the third Sephirah. The second part is ha-Elohim, which adds to 91, the number of אָמֵן, Amen, one of the special divine names for Kether; and the word Elohim itself is the divine name attributed to Binah.

The number of Beth-ha-Elohim is 503, and this is the value of the word גָּרְשָׁ, gawrash, of the phrase יְחִזָּה־דָּעַת, and of the word רְגַשׁ, regash.

The first of these, as a verb pronounced gawrash, means "to drive, to thrust, to cast out, to expel, to put forth fruit." Every one of these meanings is directly related to the Mars-force attributed to Key 16 and the letter Peh. The symbolism of the Tower, with its falling figures and toppling crown, is in obvious agreement with all but the last of the meanings just given. When one remembers, however, that Mars presided over the fertility of fields and herds, and that the Mars-force is the active principle in reproduction, "to put forth fruit" is also understandable. What is more, the lightning-flash in Key 16 is a symbol of the manifestation of the whole Tree of Life, and of the descent of the Holy Influence, Mezla, through the thirty-two paths, whereby all things are brought into existence. And lightning was supposed by the Greeks to make fields fertile.

This is borne out by the fact that the tower has twenty-two courses, corresponding

to the paths of the letters. Again, before the lightning struck it, this tower with its crown was a very obvious phallic symbol, so that it represented a delusion which is very closely associated with reproduction. This is the delusion of the genetic superiority of certain families, or of certain races.

This delusion has a great deal to do with war. Every family, every tribe, every nation entrapped by this false belief sets great store by physical inheritance, and believes in its divine right to rule other families, tribes, or nations. The basic error of separateness is actually derived from man's feeling that he possesses a body which is his very own, surrounded by various things which are objects of his desires, and which he seeks also to "own," by hook or by crook.

As a noun, spelled with the same letters, but with vowel points which make its pronunciation geresh, the word we are considering signifies "a fruit, a product of the earth, produce." The letters of the word are clues to a deeper meaning. The first is Gimel, letter of the Moon. The second is Resh, letter of the Sun. The last is Shin, the alphabetical symbol of what Hindus call Prana, and of what the alchemists designate both as "their" Fire and "their" Quintessence. Thus the word is a symbol for Moon, Sun and Fire, and since it also means "a product of the earth," we may take it to be another symbol for that most precious fruit, the Stone of the Wise, compounded by Moon, Sun and Fire from the elements composing the earth.

The phrase תְּחִיָּה-דָעַת, yekhayah-da'ath, means "sheweth knowledge," and is from Psalm 19:2, "Night unto night sheweth knowledge." Note that night shows knowledge to night, while day utters speech to day. Thus the passage from which this phrase is taken is directly associated with the letter Peh, the mouth as the organ of speech.

Some ancient Tarot Keys show the lightning-bolt issuing from the mouth of a sun-disk with a human face, like that of the sun in Key 19. Furthermore, the first chapter of Genesis says "night" is the name for darkness, or for what the Tree of Life represents by the black hue of Binah the Mother. The womb of night brings forth the day, and there can be no question that the scene in Key 16 represents night. Night, moreover, is the time we associate with generation and conception; and the Hebrew word da'ath, knowledge, is known to mean often, if not primarily, what the Bible intimates when it says: "And Adam knew his wife, and she conceived."

Note, in passing, that the Hebrew verb יָדַע, yawdah, "to know," has for its first two letters those which spell יְ, yod, "hand," and for its final letter Ayin, which means the human eye. To know is to apprehend, or touch, and to see. This is an excellent example of the self-defining characteristic of many of the older Hebrew roots.

Finally, 503, the number of Beth-ha-Elohim, is that of rawgash, which means "to rage" or "to be violent." It signifies also "to come together, to assemble (as a mob)." This last meaning, though it applies more particularly to an angry, or even riotous assemblage, is closely related to the Greek original for our word "church," for ekklesia means "an assembly, a congregation." Perhaps the connection is even closer than appears at first, for the history of religion makes it only too clear that churches have on

many occasions been scenes of violence and of unseemly ebullitions of the mob spirit.

After all, what brings any group of persons into a church, or other assembly, is that they share common beliefs and feelings. There may be dissenting voices in a crowd, but the underlying quality of crowd consciousness is emotional unity. Thus it is not surprising, when we consider that the majority in any congregation are still caught in the delusion of separateness, to find that churches are not always wholly devoted to peaceful worship.

Everyone accustomed to dealing with crowds soon learns that unity of feeling, rather than intellectual agreement, dominates such assemblages. The pitchman on a street corner, the orator at a political meeting, the evangelist in his pulpit, all employ the same principles of psychology. They resort to every device they know in order to bring about unity of feeling amongst their hearers. To the extent that they succeed in this, to that extent do they wield influence over the persons composing the crowd. That influence may wane when the company disperses, but for the time being it subdues the intelligence and the will of all who are caught in the emotional contagion of the group.

"House of God," moreover, reminds us of a New Testament statement which was certainly familiar to the inventors of Tarot: "What, do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit that is within you, which you have received from God? (1 Corinthians, 6:19)" Thus we may regard the tower as being a symbol for the human body.

So it is, and it is made of clay bricks to emphasize this idea. What is more, the Hebrew word for brick is Levanah, and the same word means "Moon," and is used by Qabalists to designate the ninth Sephirah, which they associate with the reproductive organs of the Grand Man symbolized by the Tree of Life. The Grand Man, moreover, is both male and female, the Heavenly Androgyne.

The other ancient title for Key 16 is "The Fire of Heaven." In Hebrew this is בֵּן שָׁמָיִם, esh min-ha-shamaim. We find it in 2 Kings 1:10, where it certainly refers to lightning. Modern knowledge confirms the old esoteric doctrine that the Holy Influence is of the same nature as lightning. What else do we mean when we speak of the electrical constitution of matter? The old Qabalists knew this as well as do we, just as they knew the earth is a globe, circling round the sun, long before Copernicus.

The more esoteric meaning of esh min-ha-shamaim reveals itself when we notice that בֵּן, the second word in the phrase, is the same as the noun meaning "manna," the mysterious food of the Children of Israel during their years of wandering in the wilderness. Furthermore, the number of this word is 90, and this is the value of the letter-name Mem, signifying water; and in Key 16, surely, we have a representation of the fall of fire and water from the heavens. This is our true source of sustenance, and to this the story of the manna refers.

Nor is this all. The "water" of the alchemists is fiery. Electricity is often described as being a fluid. The Mars-force and this electrical fluid are identical. Our

physical bodies are electric machines, and physical existence is an electrical phenomenon. When we truly understand what it is that excites us, what makes us enter into pursuits designed to satisfy our desires, what, in consequence of such pursuits, increases our knowledge and unfolds our intellectual powers, then we shall understand the twenty-seventh path. In our enlightenment we shall see how subtly correct is every detail of the symbolism shown by Key 16.

Yet further, הַשְׁמָיִם, ha-shamaim, the heavens, is the number 395, and in Hebrew this is the value of Neshamah, the name of the Divine Soul seated in Binah. The fire that overthrows our houses of delusion and separateness is, as the lessons on Key 16 in TAROT FUNDAMENTALS declare, the flash of inspiration coming down into our personal lives from the Divine Soul. The "heavens" which declare the glory of God are the interior heavens of Binah.

The lightning-flash, therefore, may be compared to the paths of the letters Cheth and Mem, descending from Binah. Through the path of Cheth the Holy Influence descends from the Dark Mother, to be reflected in the Sphere of Mars, Geburah. From the Sphere of Mars the same influence descends through the path of Mem, to energize Hod, the Sphere of Mercury, which is also the terminus of the twenty-seventh path. If you will but look at these paths and the corresponding Keys, and let the meaning of the pictures take possession of your mind, you will know what they mean better than we could explain in hundreds of pages.

The magical power attributed to the twenty-seventh path is thus described: "To foresee all future events which do not depend on a superior free will, or on an all undiscernible cause." The choice of words here is subtle. No event depends on any personal "superior free will," because all events depend on the One Will which finds expression through every living creature, and is, as the text concerning the path intimates, what excites every creature into action, and constitutes its essential life.

To the ignorant, this One Will seems to be an "all undiscernible cause," which they believe to be a "God" dwelling somewhere up in the skies, or behind the scenes of the world, or even outside the universe altogether. The wise know the same God as an in-dwelling Presence. They cannot define in words what they know. Every system of theology falls to pieces like the Tower when a human being receives the light of direct knowledge.

Many persons may, and do, know God. More than this, as St. Paul says, they know God exactly. There is no vague guess, no dim, shadowy apprehension. It is full illumination, and the knowledge it brings carries with it power. Thus the truly wise are able to forecast the course of human events long before the unenlightened ever guess their trend or their outcome. This is what enabled the Brothers of the Rosy Cross to foresee the American Revolution, and lend their influence to the various movements which led to that great step forward in human liberation.

When the fire of inspiration from Neshamah illuminates a man, it destroys the delusion of personal autonomy and isolation. It gives both insight and foresight. Then we

see truly what the SELF is, and what is the real meaning and purpose of human personality. We become members of the inner circle of humanity, dedicated to the service of all, and by this dedication we join the company of hidden leaders and governors of the race, who are chief among men because they have no ambition for place or power, but devote themselves wholly to the cause of freedom.

The twenty-eighth path is that of the letter Tzaddi, symbolized by Key 17, the Star. It is the second path proceeding from Netzach, which it joins to Yesod, uniting the Sphere of Venus to that of the Moon, and the desire nature to the automatic consciousness. In Hebrew, its name, Natural Intelligence, is שָׁקֵל מִתְבָּה, saykel motebah, derived from the root tawbah, which, as a verb, means "to press in, to impress, to sink," and, as a noun, is used in Rabbinical writings for "nature." Note the implication that nature is like the impression made on wax by a signet ring. Closely related is the occult doctrine that nature is impressed with characters written by the Hand of God. This is a figurative way of stating what is strictly true, that one needs only to pay close attention to events and things in order to read their meaning.

The correct Hebrew title for Key 17 is written הַכּוֹכָבִים, ha-kokabim, "The Stars," and for this reason some of the older French Tarot cards name this Key Les Etoiles, instead of L'Etoile, while Italian packs of the same period call it Le Stelle, instead of La Stella.

Now, the word kokab, besides being the Hebrew generic term for any star, has special reference to the planet Mercury, which is so named in Qabalistic books and in the later Rabbinical writings. Thus in Key 17 we see the bird of Hermes on the tree to remind us that meditation, the activity pictured by the design, is under the direction of what Tarot pictures as the Magician.

Furthermore, ha-kokabim has very illuminating number correspondences. It adds to 103, and this is the value of אָבִן הָאָדָם, ehben ha-Adam, the Stone of Adam; of בְּנוֹיִם, bonaim, builders, masons, a name used by the Essenes, and adopted also by us as part of our official title; of גָוָנָן, gawanan, to hedge about, protect, shield; of הָוָא הָאֱלֹהִים, Hu (or Hoa) ha-Elohim, "He is God," (Deuteronomy 4:38); of מֶגְדָּדִון, Megiddon, rendezvous (the place of the battle of Armageddon in the Apocalypse); and of מָגָנִי, moganiy, my shield (Psalm 119:114, in the section of that Psalm connected with the letter Samekh). Behind these words is some interesting occult doctrine, which bears on the topic of this lesson.

The Stone of Adam is a verbal symbol for the mystical union of the Father, Chokmah, with the Son, Tiphareth, in Adam, the sixth Sephirah. This is represented in the seventeenth Key by the great star surrounded by seven smaller stars.

True Bonaim, or Builders, are those who share the one secret doctrine. Historically, this was known to the Essenes, a monastic community living near the Dead Sea at the beginning of the Christian Era. They stood in relation to Judaism in much the same way that religious devotees stand in relation to orthodox Hinduism, except that they lived in communal groups, sharing all things, like the early Christians. The Essenes,

however, were not the sole custodians of the secret doctrine which has come down to us, nor do we share their views as to the necessity for celibacy.

The secret doctrine is practical, and it certainly has much to do with the occult power of the stars, but not in the superstitious sense which has debased the true esoteric astrology. Behind the Qabalah there is a deep science of the stars, and this is such as to afford more than adequate protection from every danger, this being implied by the verb גַּנְוָן, gawnan. Thus we find the Brothers of the Rosy Cross writing: "He that is false-hearted, or only greedy of riches, the same first of all shall not be able in any manner of wise to hurt us, but bring himself to utter ruin and destruction. Also our building (this indicates that the Brothers thought of themselves as Bonaim, or Masons), although one hundred thousand people had very near seen and beheld the same, shall forever remain untouched, undestroyed, and hidden to the wicked world."

For the "building" is the secret place of the Most High. It is within the brain of the illuminated adept, and is what we call the "Adytum." In an unenlightened man it is in the same condition as the Temple at the time of David. The materials are gathered, but cannot be erected into a temple by David, the warrior and man of blood. They must wait for Solomon, whose name signifies "peaceful."

The myth of Solomon in the Old Testament has, no doubt, some historical basis, but what history there is has been so interwoven with allegory that to discover the actual man round whom the legend revolves is almost impossible. Thus occult doctrine everywhere makes Solomon a symbol for the rising sun, and the very name Solomon, in the Greek of the Septuagint, is compounded of the Latin Sol, the Sanskrit Om, and the Egyptian On, in the characteristic Qabalistic tradition of mixing words from different tongues. All three, and their combination, are symbols for the EGO in Tiphareth.

The Work of the Chariot, and the practices of alchemists, yogis, Essenes, and other practical occultists, are allegorized in Freemasonry as the building of Solomon's Temple. This, the Bible tells us, was built to, and in, the "Name Jehovah." Its inner shrine, where was placed the Ark of the Covenant on which rested the Shekinah, or Divine Presence, was a cubical room, itself pronouncing the Name by its very proportions as we have shown in our explanations of the Cube of Space.

The Qabalistic commentary on this Name is Hu ha-Elohim, He is God. Hu designates Kether, and thus stands for the indivisible SELF, Yekhidah. Ha-Elohim, one of the special designations for Binah, relates also to Kether, because אֱלֹהִים is the number 91, the value of בָּרוּךְ, Amen, a name for the first Sephirah.

What is thus curiously veiled is the Absolute Unity. To say Hu ha-Elohim is to affirm the undivided singleness of what appears to be manifold. For Elohim, being the Creative Name, and being related also to Binah, is a plural noun, signifying literally, "Creative Powers."

Even the first words of the Bible indicate clearly that "creation" is a separative process, inasmuch as the verb בָּרַא, beraw, "created," means actually "to cut apart."

Thus the process of manifestation brings about the appearance of manyness. Hence they who are deluded by the innumerable pairs of opposites are forever, like David, taking sides, and battling with the Goliaths of illusion. Caught in the web of delusion, they love and hate, suffering alternations of joy and grief, such as are reflected in the many moods of the Psalms ascribed to David. It does not matter whether or not he wrote them all--or even whether or not he wrote any of them. They embody the David consciousness at its best and worst. This is the consciousness which has its flashes of inspiration, but is not fully liberated from the nightmare of belief in separateness.

Solomon is the type of complete enlightenment. His very name signifies "Perfected One." His father is David, "love," and his mother is Bath-Sheba, "Daughter of the Seven," whom David saw bathing in a garden like the central figure in Key 17.

Bath-Sheba was the wife of אוריַה, Uriah, and one has only to look at his name to see that it is a compound of אור, Aur, Light, with the Divine Name יְהָה, Jah, especially attributed to Chokmah. Thus the husband of Bath-Sheba is the "Light of Wisdom," and to that Light her son Solomon turns for guidance.

The "Seven" are the Seven Spirits of God, or the seven aspects of the One Being, symbolized in Key 17 by the smaller stars. Their name is the Divine Name assigned to Binah, Elohim. Yet these seven are in essence One, and this is the inner meaning of Hu ha-Elohim.

It is a meaning discoverable by none save those who meditate. For what we put into words, even of high and sacred esoteric origin, is not the unveiled truth a wise man knows. Truth at its profoundest goes beyond words. Thus the words of the wise may be on the lips of the unenlightened. Only meditation can plant the Seed of the Word in the heart. Then the Seed grows and bears fruit. This enables us to distinguish those who hear the Seed of the Word without planting it from those who, by prolonged meditation, carry the Seed through the twenty-eighth path, down into the automatic level of consciousness, where it takes root and unfolds in the changed life and wonder-working powers of the "new creature." Thus it is written: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

We must come to Megiddon, the place of rendezvous, the place where we experience the peace of illumination during quiet meditation after the storm and conflict of our early awakenings have passed. The literal meaning of rendezvous is "render yourself." The same root, render, is in "surrender." A man in meditation surrenders himself to the indwelling Shekinah who is the "Daughter of the Seven." He makes an appointment with Her. He seeks Her out, and to her faithful lover She unveils.

Read the Samekh section of the 119th Psalm, from which comes the word moganiy, "my shield." Every one of the eight verses begins, in the original, with the letter Samekh, and the first word of verse 116 is actually a verb formed from the root סמך, Samekh. Note particularly the opening phrase, "I hate vain thoughts." The original signifies, "I hate the empty reasonings of divided opinions." It is a key to success in meditation.

Then read the Tzaddi section of the same Psalm. The "enemies" mentioned in verse 139 typify forgetfulness. They are the distractions which must be overcome by faithful practice. He who enters into the spirit of this section of the Psalm, and lives in harmony with that spirit, is the true possessor of the twenty-eighth path. He is filled with the spirit of wisdom and counsel, so that by what he says and does he is able to manifest the ability to give efficacious consolations and wise counsels, even as we read concerning the possessor of this path of wisdom in Eliphas Levi's old manuscript.

It is written that the word of the Lord faileth not,  
And how else should it be?  
Of a truth I am victorious  
Before ever the battle is joined,  
And the continuance of my life  
Is an effulgent Splendour throughout eternity.

I am,  
Forms pass.  
From me they go,  
And again they come to me.  
Their returning  
Is what men call destruction.  
Be not deceived thereby.  
I tear down only to build anew.

Verily destruction is the foundation of existence,  
And the tearing-down thou seest  
Is but the assembling of material  
For a grander structure.

Therefore is it written:  
"Man doth not live by bread only,  
But by all that proceedeth out of PEH  
Of Tetragrammaton."

(From the BOOK OF TOKENS by Dr. Paul Foster Case.)